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# LETTER FROM ROME

To a Friend

IN

# LONDON.



Relation to the Jesuits Executed, and those that are  
to be Executed in the Countreyes.

Without other Apologie, I had the happiness to receive yours of the 5th Instant, wherein I finde the Jesuits last Speeches have made some impressions upon the mindes of some friends of yours; I take it from the passage in your Letter, that you could wish I would send you a short and plain account of that discourse. I once had you in London; about the reasons and grounds that made Jesuits and Papists generally so desperate, to call God and Angels to witness, and take it up for their Salvation at their Executions; that they are as innocent as the Child unborn, when nothing is plainer then that they are really guilty of those Crimes: they then deny.

I'll forget not, the discourse was particularly occasioned by that Letter published in print, to the Right Honourable the Duke of Essex; concerning John Wall, a Papist, condemned to be hanged at White Chappell, 1671. by Baron Here in Dublin; He was executed denying the fact, but the rope breaking he immediately confest himself guilty of the fact he denied before, and that he had been seduced from a Priest, who bid him never doubt his salvation, if he did not discover his Confederates: adding this reason to it, that the fact was not committed against Gods people the Papists.

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Afterwards

Afterwards we had some digressions about the Lyes, Perjuries and equivocations, and dying oaths of Father *Garnet* the provincial of the *Jesuits*, *Tresham*, *Treshmond* and other *Jesuits* executed for the Gun-powder treason, whose measures undoubtedly, Father *Whitchbread*, *Gavan*, *Harcott*, *Town*, *Fennick*, and *Langhorn* have exactly followed in this present Plot.

Sir, Were your friends here in *Rome*, they would be quickly convinced; the Priests and people here trouble themselves no farther then to get Indulgences to sin, pardons, undergopennances, obtain absolutions, or either to say Masses for the dead or pray to them, Religion here consists in these, Heaven and Purgatorie they seem sure of, none seem to be in danger of Hell, because the Priests can keep them out. If not, the whole Church will engage for it for Money.

Whatever this Church of *Rome* has been formerly, it is supplied now with a doting Pope, Cardinals, and *Jesuits*, who are only States-men and Politicians, in the disguise of Church-men, for in truth here is no guile or appearance of Religion at all.

Not only here in *Rome*, but in all other Popish Dominions, *Russians*, and *Affassines* are hired for a small matter to stab, poyson, or murder any person, who presently run to the Priests who will absolve and protect them; and for money pray for the Soul of the murdered, that it may not go to hell, these are charitable.

But not to detain you longer, from having your wish, the main ground I insisted upon was their ignorance of the scriptures; for if that chief end of their learned Church-men, were to withdraw men from the love and study of the Scriptures, it is an invincible demonstration, that the Scriptures are not their rule in living or dying, but they confide in the traditions of men.

That it may be manifest, what value the Scriptures are with the Church of *Rome*, these following instances Collected from the Books of their learned Guides will confirm, then judge whether the present Roman Catholick Religion, be of God or Man, &c.

When *Brentius*, Objected in the Confession of *Wutenberge*, that one *Herman* a learned Papist, had not been ashamed to say in publick, that the Scriptures were of no greater Estimation then *Aesops Fables*: but for the Testimony of the Church, this position pleased Cardinal *Hofius* so well, that he defended *Herman*, and commended his Speech, for says *Hofius* who was a Bishop also, The Scriptures would be of as little authority, but as the Church owns them; most of their eminent Writers since *Luther*, are of the same Opinion.

*Melchior Canus*, in his 7th. Chapter of his places of Divinity, terms the Scriptures dumb and deaf judges, and that the Pope by his prerogative may reject them.

Pope *Leo* the 10th. will not be behind hand with *Canus*, for discoursing with Cardinal *Bembus* about the Gospel, in contempt said, how profitable has this Fable of Christ been to us in *Rome*.

*Hofius* in his 4th. Book against *Brentius*, affirms that the Scriptures when alledged by Papists is the Word of God; but when Protestants alledge it is the exprefs word of the devil.

As they have Printed here in *Rome, &c.* that there is no Plot, that there was never such a Man as *Sir Edmundsbury Godfrey*, only a story raised from the Town in *Norfolk*, call'd *St. Edmundsbury*, so they deal by the Scriptures, making the simple people here believe, that the Religion of the Protestants in *England* lieth in Rags and Beasts skins; because our Bib'es are bound up in Leather.

The same Cardinal in his triple Dialogue, and Cardinal *Casanus* in his second Epistle to the *Bohemians*, Without blushing tells us, that if any one hath the Exposition of the Church of *Rome*, though he understand it not, ( but be written for them as the Jesuits last Speeches, ) nay though he do not know whether it be agreeable to the Scripture or his own minde; ( as *Hills* paper found in his pocket at Execution, ) yet he has the very word of God, which will save him; but that you may better understand the Cardinals meanings, They both agree that the Scriptures are to be expounded by this Church, according to their present occasion, and that Obedience is to be yeilded, to that interpretation without questioning, as an Ox or Ass obeys his Master, and so dye like beasts.

Now whether Father *Garnet*, and his associates have not left an exact copy, for his successor Father *Whitebread*, and his accomplices lately executed, or for *Mr. Langhorn* or any other Popish Traitor to follow; is left to the thoughts of your friends, for they have heard it.

Father *Garnet*, being asked before the Lords Commissioners in the Tower, whether *Hall* the Jesuit and he had any conference together; he swore upon his Salvation, seconding it with Imprecations and Oaths, that he did not Equivocate, then denied again and again, that he had no discourse with *Hall*, afterwards when he knew that *Hall* had confessed it, *Garnet* owned he had offended, if Equivocation did not help him.

He swore upon Oath, he had neither writ nor sent to *Tresham* the Jesuit, which he knew to be false, his own Letters being intercepted, they disproved him.

*Tresham* one of the Powder-Treason Traitors, did confess, that *Garnet* did know of the Treason, but yet three or four hours before his death, by his wifes Importunee, he set it down in his own hand-writing, with an Oath and protestation upon his salvation, that he had not seen *Garnet* in sixteen years before at least, and so dyed denying his first Confession; not long after his Oath and protestation proved false, besides *Garnet* himself confessed, that he had seen *Tresham* many times within that space.

Whereupon being demanded, what he thought of *Treshams* dying Oath and protestation, *Garnet* gave his opinion under his own hand, that it was lawfull to imitate *Treshams* equivocating at the very point of death; with some reasons for it; that it was lawfull in Life time, upon some necessity, or to free a friend from danger, and since lawfull in life, then as lawfull in a dying man; *Causabon*, *Ibid.* pag. 202.

Much more is upon Record of this *Garnet*, who used to write his answers and denials with his own hand: for the same reason the five Jesuits and *Langhorn* has had their speeches written, that they might not be liable to misconstruction.

In all this Father *Garnet*, acted and wrote nothing contrary to the sense of the



the Roman Catholick Writers : but Father *Gavan* in affirming only *Marian* was for a little King killing : this contradicts hundreds of their Authors, who expressly write upon King killing ; that the whole papall World are the *Jesuits* advocates, and trust their own souls with them, and the Education of their Sons : Father *Gavan* forgot that *France*, *Venice*, and other parts has expell'd the *Jesuits*, for their Conspiracys or Murthers.

Protestants may be so Charitable to think men that are Christians as the *Popists* are, durst not die denying the truth at the last moment of mortallity, but the premise considered, they will find cause to conclude otherwise.

True, there is great cause to pittie the people deluded by these Priests, poor souls they scarce know more of the Bible, then what their Priests tell them, that it is an Heretical book only in use with the Protestants which they call Hereticks. However to stop the mouths of some of their people, they have a Bible but of the Popes own making.

'Tis most certain, the Priests Orders and Absolutions are of more Authority with such ignorant people then the Scriptures, which is confirmed by Mr. *Prance* in his narrative, who affirms he would have dyed and have denied the Murder of Sir *Edmund Bury Godfrey*, if he had had the absolution of a Priest, then he had held himself as innocent as the Child unborn.

Not only the people but the priests also are generally a ignorant of the true Scriptures. *Luther* and others have affirmed of themselves, that they have been Popish priests many years, and never read so much as a leaf of the Bible, the Popes Canons being all their Scriptures ; One Canon was thus, that if the Popes should lead themselves and others to Hell by heaps, yet none must be presumptuous to ask them why they do so.

*Paulus Emilius* in his 7 books affirms, that the Pope suffer'd the Embassadors of *Cicilia*, to prostrate themselves before him, and say unto him, O thou which takest away the sins of the whole World have mercy upon us : no wonder then that those that really believe in the Pope, and the Priests absolutions, should die and think themselves happie, as *Langborn*, and other Traytors, to be whipt, and sent with the Popes passe into the other World,

Sir, I fear I have been too tedious, but consider it is my care to omit nothing that may serve you or satisfy your friends, by this Letter from your Friend,

Rome, June 10. 79.

*Stilo Novo.*

T. W.

F I N I S.